

DRINKING SONGS AND OTHER SONGS

BY

W. R. TITTERTON



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DRINKING SONGS AND OTHER SONGS

W. R. Titterton
January, 1929

DRINKING SONGS AND OTHER SONGS

BY

W. R. TITTERTON

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

G. K. CHESTERTON

The Tunes, invented or adapted by the
author, have been arranged for the piano
by VAN NORMAN LUCAS.



LONDON

CECIL PALMER

49 CHANDOS STREET, COVENT GARDEN, W.C. 2

F I R S T
EDITION
1 9 2 8
C O P Y-
R I G H T

THE DEDICATION:

TO

THE TAVERN LADS OF FLEET STREET

CAPTAIN or Colonel, give it a name,
Harry from Hoxton, Claude of Debrett !
Beer in a tankard ? Mine is the same.

Toss it off boldly ! Score up the debt !
(Eyes of Delilah, hair in a net.)

Must do my copy. (Lips like a rose.)
Talk of the tavern ! Marvellous ! Yet
Down the sink all of it goes.

Trifling and topical, turgid and tame,
News that we gleaned with our agony's sweat,
Counterfeit gospels—whose is the blame ?

Pars about persons we say that we've met.
Write it out boldly ! Never regret !
Shrubs in the suburbs come at the close.

Print of the galley, seductively jet—
Down the sink all of it goes.

Flaunt of free lancing. Good for the game !
Passion per thousand. Vive la coquette !
Is it a tune for the trumpet of Fame ?

“ Ten lines too long ” is all that we get.
Curses for cutting, thanks for the stet.
Could we do finer than this if we chose ?
Lump in your copy, and come for a wet !
Down the sink all of it goes.

Prince of the column, slovenly set,
Was there a flame in the heart of the prose ?
Essay, or narrative ? Do you forget ?
Down the sink all of it goes.

INTRODUCTION

IT is usual, in writing such a preface as this, for the Writer to commend the enclosed verses to the Reader, In this particular case, however, such a form would fall short of truth. It would not in any case, perhaps, be wise to deprecate the Reader. It would be less than tactful in the introducer to taunt and revile the Reader ; or the whole art of Reading. The Reader doubtless has his virtues ; the quiet, laborious virtues of the student. Nevertheless, in the event of any arrogance, the Reader must be firmly told that he is not the only pebble on the beach, or the only person in the world, and that these priceless words were not written for him alone. In a word, these songs are intended to be sung ; and not merely, in a base and mechanical manner, to be read. The reader who is only a reader cannot truly be said even to have read them. The reader who does not, on beholding the first few lines, instantly burst into song or into some sort of loud bellowing noise, is devoid of critical delicacy and *finesse*. It is unfortunate that this test, which is the triumph and glory of the songs, is also the condemnation and complete extinction of the preface. Obviously, a thing meant to be sung ought to have no preface. Can we be sure that any one, on reading these prose paragraphs of mine, will instantly carol them aloud to an impromptu or a popular air ? Alas, it is by no means certain.

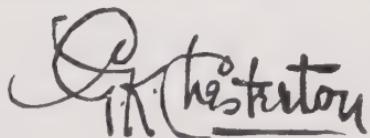
I know that these songs, especially those at the beginning of the book, are songs that can really be sung, because I have sung them myself ; and a more complete proof of lyrical adaptability and the powerful contagion of melody could not be found. The author, who is an old friend of mine and an older friend of Fleet Street, has led these choruses

INTRODUCTION

in many companies that I remember with gratitude and entertainment ; in many gatherings in the brave days of old, before some of the bravest left us for even better things. For the tradition of the festive chorus, which is one of the oldest things of human history, had descended to us by a tradition unconscious and unbroken ; and the last men of Grub Street sang in their taverns as naturally as the first barbarians sang round their camp-fires. We did not have to be taught to do it. We did not call it Community Singing. We called it singing. Whether even that was not too friendly and favourable a description of it we were in no mood so cold and unconvivial as to discuss. I hasten to say that I intend no aspersion of the Community Singing movement as a movement ; I have no doubt it is an excellent and necessary movement. At least it is certainly excellent if it is necessary. But I cannot help mildly wondering why it should be necessary. I have no doubt that when the habit of human laughter has temporarily disappeared, under the influence of Evolutionary Ethics and Uplift, it will be recovered by something called the Individual Mirth Movement ; and I shall (with my dying breath) strongly approve of that movement. But I shall think it odd that men should have left off laughing in the middle of the twentieth century, as I do that they left off singing in the middle of the nineteenth. I am all the more proud of sharing in a custom that bridged the abyss of the industrial anarchy, in which so many bridges were broken.

For the rest, if songs that can really be sung are not meant merely to be read, still less are they meant merely to be reviewed. To weigh down the wings of these soaring lyrics with a load of commentary would be equally incongruous whether it were compliment or criticism. The writer of these songs has very definite ideals and principles of his own, for which he has sacrificed much in his time ; but it is only very indirectly that they are indicated in the sort of levities which the serious, who are shallow but not light, may read in a more literal fashion. For that quality in certain modern intellectuals, by which they do not sing when they sing, is the same by which they do not think when they think,

or pray when they pray, or fight when they fight, or define when they define. All that ought to be made clear and decisive they leave loose and vague ; all that ought to be loose and vague, like songs and lighter memories, they would probably explore and correct with a pedantic pen. To such we need offer no defence or explanation, save in a most general fashion ; leaving them to ponder on our inexplicable cheerfulness and to call a parody a paradox. It will be enough to inform them gravely that we do not offer the poem about King Solomon as a contribution to the Higher Criticism of the Hebrew Scriptures or to the solution of the Sex Problem in modern fiction. Nor do we account the lines upon the town of Ickenham a complete sociological survey of the merits of that suburb ; or as any kind of substitute for a reliable Fabian tract on the expansion of the modern town. Mr. Titterton and I have been engaged for many years past in fighting for what I will not call a forlorn hope ; for I think that our demeanour at least has been rather hopeful than forlorn. We have indeed had various things to say about these serious matters ; about Fabianism or suburbs or sex problems or the Higher Criticism. We have been engaged in urging what we regard as the return to a more normal human society ; which, instead of following the Capitalists to the last extreme of their modern mania for concentration, should rather reverse the process and return to a reasonable equality of distribution. In that sense, if any malicious person likes to take advantage of the confession, we have sometimes been serious. In that sense, if any enemy would press the charge home, we have been intermittently guilty of public spirit. But the enemy will look in vain, through many pages of verse here provided for him, for any definite details of the crime. These songs have nothing to do with the Distributist State ; except that in the Distributist State men may perhaps be happy enough to sing them.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. K. Chesterton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "G. K." on top and "Chesterton" written below it in a larger, more formal script.

C O N T E N T S

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ERRATA

Page 2.—*The last line but one should read :*
And met that gal of mine—Yo ho !

Page 20.—*The last line but one should read :*
You can answer my questions another night,

DRINKING SONGS

KING SOLOMON'S WIVES

KING SOLOMON took ten thousand wives
From Tarshish and from Tyre,
With a Columbine from Samarkand
Whenever he might require.
But whether he fetched 'em fat or lean,
Or whether tall or short,
There were no flies on the shy gazelles
King Solomon took to court.
(There were no flies, etc.)

King Solomon had ten thousand wives
In his house of cedar wood.
There was Sheba's queen, and Helen of Troy,
And Little Red Riding Hood.
But whether their skins were white as milk,
Or black as a chimney-sweep,
There were no flies on the shy gazelles
King Solomon used to keep.

King Solomon had ten thousand wives,
And he knew them all by name ;
Which has rather the sound of a thundering lie,
But it's gospel all the same.
And he sent a chit by his valley-de-sham
Whenever he wanted sport.
For there were no flies on the shy gazelles
King Solomon took to court.

DRINKING SONGS

King Solomon had ten thousand wives,
 And one was a suffragette,
 So he knocked her down, and he bundled her up
 In a deep-sea trawling net.
 He bundled her up, and he dropped her down
 On the deep sea's rocky bed.
 And you ought to have heard the horrible things
 Old Father Neptune said.

King Solomon had ten thousand wives,
 And his wisdom was to seek.
 It's all very well in the spring of the year,
 But it's bad when the limbs grow weak ;
 When the limbs and the lungs grow weak, my lads,
 And the skin is shrivelled and dry,
 And the shy gazelles make an impudent face,
 For they know the reason why . . .

King Solomon had ten thousand wives,
 And he wished he had but one.
 For he wasn't no hand at arithmetic,
 And his toil was never done.
 So he bade them build him a bachelor bed,
 And he never got no sleep,
 For there were no flies on the shy gazelles
 King Solomon used to keep.

Refrain—

Yo ho ! yo ho ! yo ho !
 Then send the drink around !
 And here's to every fancy lass
 In London to be found !
 For Solomon wouldn't have cornered queens,
 Or cuddled a Columbine
 If he'd booked a passage to London Town,
 A galley of Tyre to London Town,
 Nor'-nor'-west to London Town,
 And met that gal of mine—
 That sporty old gal of mine.

KING SOLOMON'S WIVES

3

Arranged by Van Norman Lucas

VOICE

Musical score for Voice and Piano. The score consists of ten staves. The first staff is for the Voice, starting in G clef, 6/8 time, and B-flat key signature. The second staff is for the Piano, starting in G clef, common time, and B-flat key signature. The third staff is for the Voice, starting in G clef, common time, and B-flat key signature. The fourth staff is for the Piano, starting in G clef, common time, and B-flat key signature. The fifth staff is for the Voice, starting in G clef, common time, and B-flat key signature. The sixth staff is for the Piano, starting in G clef, common time, and B-flat key signature. The seventh staff is for the Voice, starting in G clef, common time, and B-flat key signature. The eighth staff is for the Piano, starting in G clef, common time, and B-flat key signature. The ninth staff is for the Voice, starting in G clef, common time, and B-flat key signature. The tenth staff is for the Piano, starting in G clef, common time, and B-flat key signature.

CHORUS CONTINUED OVERLEAF

Musical score for Voice and Piano, continuing from the previous page. The score consists of two staves. The first staff is for the Voice, starting in G clef, common time, and B-flat key signature. The second staff is for the Piano, starting in G clef, common time, and B-flat key signature.

DRINKING SONGS

King Solomon's Wives

VOICE

PIANO

The musical score consists of two parts: a vocal part (Voice) and a piano accompaniment. The vocal part is in treble clef, and the piano part is in bass clef. The music is in common time, with a key signature of one flat. The vocal part begins with a series of eighth-note chords, followed by a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The piano part provides harmonic support with sustained notes and chords. The score is divided into ten staves, each ending with a double bar line and repeat dots, indicating a recurring section of the song.

THE ENGLISH OAK

THE oak tree meets the sunrise, lads,
Half-tempest and half-gold.

When I was young, when I was young
This English Oak was old.

The oak tree braves the noontide, lads,
Like granite rock abud ;
But the roots of him, the roots of him
Are quick with English blood.

The songbirds know his branches, boys,
His harp the breezes play ;
But the oak tree stands, the oak tree stands
On sentry all the day.
The oak tree fronts the sunset, boys,
Half-tempest and half-gold ;
But the soul of him, the soul of him
Is rooted in the mould.

Deep dig those blind, divining roots
Far from the sun and wind ;
Till the rats gnaw through, the rats gnaw through
The roots that are so blind.
But the rats have yet their work to do,
And the tale is half untold ;
For Life was young, and Death was young
When this old oak was old.

BURTON BREW

THE beer they brew in Burton
Is brown as autumn bowers ;
It holds the glint of autumn skies,
The scent of autumn flowers.
The beer they brew in Burton
Is strong as heart's desire ;
The man that drains a pot or two
Shall leap the tallest spire ;
Shall fly on wings of amber light
Beyond the morning star,
And find the quiring cherubim
Beside him in the bar.

(Chorus, gentlemen, please !)

With the good brown beer of Burton,
The bonny brown beer of Burton,
The strong brown beer, the nut-brown beer
Beside him in the bar.

The beer they brew in Burton
Makes all men kith and kin ;
It warms the cockles of the heart
And other parts within.
The beer they brew in Burton
Bestows the gift of speech ;
No Czech-Slovak dialect
Is then beyond your reach.
The gift of sack to Shakespeare
Is Burton's gift to you,
And what the Swan of Avon did,
The tavern Swan may do.

(Chorus, gentlemen, please !)

BURTON BREW

7

*1st and 2nd Verses.**Arranged by Van Norman Lucas*

VOICE



PIANO

A single staff of musical notation for the piano, starting with a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps, and a common time signature. The music consists of eighth and sixteenth note patterns.

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CHORUS

A single staff of musical notation for the chorus, starting with a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps, and a common time signature. The music consists of eighth and sixteenth note patterns.

A single staff of musical notation for the chorus, starting with a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps, and a common time signature. The music consists of eighth and sixteenth note patterns.

DRINKING SONGS

Burton Brew

Poco rit.

3rd Verse

Poco rit.

CHORUS AS BEFORE

This musical score for "Burton Brew" consists of ten staves of music. The key signature is G major (one sharp). The time signature varies between common time and 6/8. The vocal parts include soprano, alto, tenor, bass, and a chorus. The piano accompaniment features a bass line and harmonic chords. The score includes dynamic markings such as "Poco rit." and "CHORUS AS BEFORE". The title "Burton Brew" is centered above the first staff.

With the good brown beer of Burton,
The bonny brown beer of Burton,
The strong brown beer, the nut-brown beer,
 The tavern Swan may do.

The beer they brew in Burton
 Is like the mighty deep ;
It carries you from port to port,
 And rocks you fast asleep.
The beer they brew in Burton
 Is worth its weight in gold.
They hide it in the cellarage,
 They hoard it till it's old,
And then they serve it freely
 To commoner and king.
So while they brew the Burton brew,
 I care, not I, for Pussyfoot,
 The sleek and squint-eyed Pussyfoot.
Yes, while they brew the Burton brew
 We'll lift our mugs and sing :
 (Chorus, gentlemen, please !)

To the good brown beer of Burton,
The bonny brown beer of Burton.
While Burton brew soaks through and through,
 O Death ! where is thy sting ?

IN PRAISE OF ICKEN'M

LET'S all go down to Icken'm
For people say of Icken'm :
Time's taxi ticks at Icken'm
Majestically slow.
We'll buy a house at Icken'm,
A six-roomed house in Icken'm,
Six rooms with something chic in 'em,
Or else a bungalow ;
Heigho ! Heigho !
A six-roomed hut at Icken'm
From Messrs. Blank & Co.

The teasing toffs of Twicken'm
Look down in scorn at Icken'm,
For there are trams at Twicken'm,
And there Thames waters flow.
But houses rise at Icken'm,
Among the trees of Icken'm,
Four-square and firm at Icken'm,
Far finer than they show.
Heigho ! Heigho !
With plants and people pickin' 'em
Just like a puppet-show.

From 'Illingdon to Icken'm
They're timberin' and brickin' 'em ;
And lanterns with a wick in 'em
In all the windows glow.

IN PRAISE OF ICKEN'M

II

*Not too fast.**Arranged by Van Norman Lucas*

VOICE



PIANO

A musical score for voice and piano. The piano part begins with a treble clef, common time, and a key signature of one sharp. It features a continuous harmonic progression with eighth-note chords. The vocal line begins with eighth notes. The piano part continues with eighth-note chords, providing harmonic support throughout the piece.

DRINKING SONGS

Brave bloom the 'omes of Icken'm,
And those who strive to stick in 'em,
The palsied and the quick in 'em,
They never want to go.

Heigho ! Heigho !
Though some are dreadful sick in 'em,
They never want to go.

The drowsy thorp of Icken'm
Is famous as a chicken 'ome,
Yes, liquorin' at Icken'm,
You hear the roosters crow.
And, hiccoughin' at Icken'm,
You hear the crickets crikkin' 'ome,
Across the fields of Icken'm,
The dreamy fields. And so——

We'll all go down to Icken'm,
To drink a pint at Icken'm,
With thirsty lips, and lickin' 'em,
Nid-noddin' in a row.
We'll all go down to Icken'm,
To Ick-Ick-Ick-Ick-Icken'm ;
And what they drink at Icken'm
I'll tell you when I know.
Heigho ! Heigho !
But we'll all go down to Icken'm
Where the aspidistras grow.

LITH AND LISTEN !

LITH and listen, lassies and lads,
Lith and listen to me.

I will have no barley-water,
Cocoa, coffee, nor tea.

I will have no rum to-day,
Though rum is a liquor golden,
But I will have a tankard of ale,
Jolly good ale and olden.

Ganymede, Ganymede, tapster bold,
Stop your larks and do as you're told !
Fill me as much as the pot will hold
Of jolly good ale.

Lith and listen, bully brave boys,
Lith and listen to me !

I will have no crème de menthe,
Arrack or eau-de-vie.

I will have no sherbet to-day,
Sherbet's the booze for a Soldan,
But I will have a gallon of ale,
Jolly good ale and olden.

Hebe, Hebe, tavern maid,
Kiss me quick and don't be afraid !
And broach me a barrel well known to the trade
Of jolly good ale.

Lith and listen, lyrical lads,
Lith and listen to me !

I will have no Sherries sack,
Nor yet no Malvoisie.

DRINKING SONGS

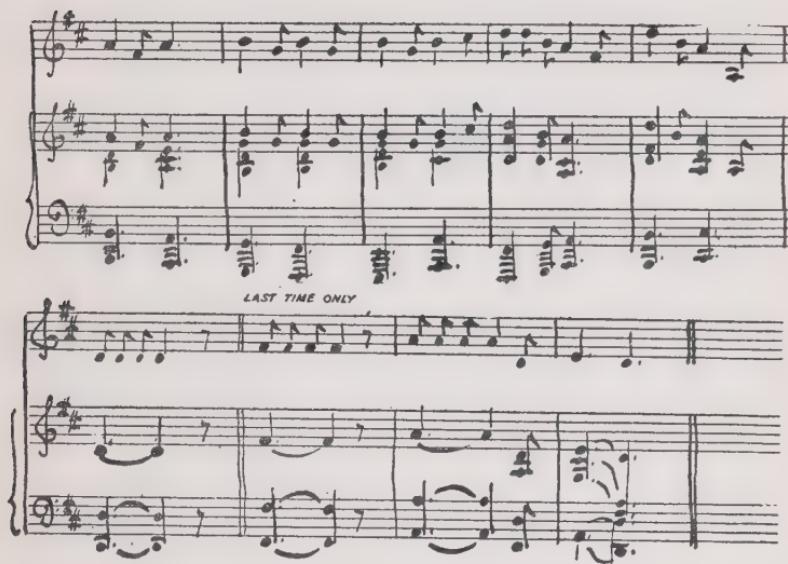
Lith and Listen!

Arranged by Van Norman Lucas

VOICE

PIANO

The musical score is a two-staff arrangement. The top staff is for the Voice, starting with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and common time (C). The bottom staff is for the Piano, starting with a bass clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and common time (C). The vocal part begins with eighth-note pairs, followed by eighth-note pairs with a breve rest, then eighth-note pairs again. The piano part starts with a forte chord (F# major), followed by eighth-note pairs, a forte chord, eighth-note pairs, and a forte chord. The vocal part continues with eighth-note pairs, followed by eighth-note pairs with a breve rest, then eighth-note pairs again. The piano part continues with eighth-note pairs, followed by eighth-note pairs with a breve rest, then eighth-note pairs again.



I will have the right brown ale
That Mynn and Lillywhite bowled on.
I will have a gallon of ale,
Jolly good ale and olden.

Landlord, landlord, rosy and round,
In for a penny, in for a pound,
Fill me up, till I fall to the ground,
With jolly brown ale,
With jolly brown ale,
Jolly good ale and olden.

THE SPANISH GIRL

WHEN I was skipper of the *Saucy Sal*,
Weigh down to Rio.
I fell in love with a Spanish gal.
Oh, take me home again !

I met her in a dancing-place.
Weigh down to Rio.
Was none to match her southern grace.
Oh, take me home again !

She wooed me with her southern charms,
Weigh down to Rio.
And she locked me in her loving arms.
Oh, take me home again !

She kissed me and she called me dear,
Weigh down to Rio.
And she gave me pots of Spanish beer.
Oh, take me home again !

She gave me pots of Spanish wine,
Weigh down to Rio.
And I kissed her and I called her mine.
Oh, take me home again !

She took me to her little bedroom,
Weigh down to Rio.
And she vowed to make me her bridegroom.
Oh, take me home again !

*The Spanish Girl**Arranged by Van Norman Lucas*

VOICE

PIANO

She sang me songs I did not know,
Weigh down to Rio.
And then I slept till I must go.
Oh, take me home again !

And when I woke that girl was gone,
Weigh down to Rio.
And there I lay with nixey's on.
Oh, take me home again !

That Spanish girl, so brisk and bold,
Weigh down to Rio.
Had pinched my watch and pinched my gold.
Oh, take me home again !

She'd pinched my slacks, and pinched my shirt.
Weigh down to Rio.
So I waits till night, 'cos my pride was hurt.
Oh, take me home again !

Then I slung a blanket round my hip,
Weigh down to Rio.
And I cursed that gal till I made my ship.
Oh, take me home again !

The bosen grinned and the seamen laughed,
Weigh down from Rio.
And the *Saucy Sal* was a gawd-damned craft.
Oh, take me home again !

Oh, take me home to Portsmouth Ditch !
Weigh down from Rio.
And if ever I meet that Spanish bitch
She'll take me home again.

LET'S GET DRUNK TO-DAY !

WHAT is the meaning of life or of death ?
Why are we born with a passion for breath ?
Is it worth loving, and living, and such ?
Should we be true to our duke, or our dutch ?
Is there a purpose in human affairs ?
Nobody knows, boys, and nobody cares.
So bang on your tables, and bump on your chairs,
And let's get drunk to-day !

Let's get drunk to-day !
Hurray ! hurray !
Who wouldn't do his duty
To beer so full and fruity ?
Good beer is just the tipple
To set dull care at bay.
So fill up your glasses, be merry and bright !
You can answer my questions,
But let's get drunk to-day !

LET'S GET DRUNK TO-DAY!

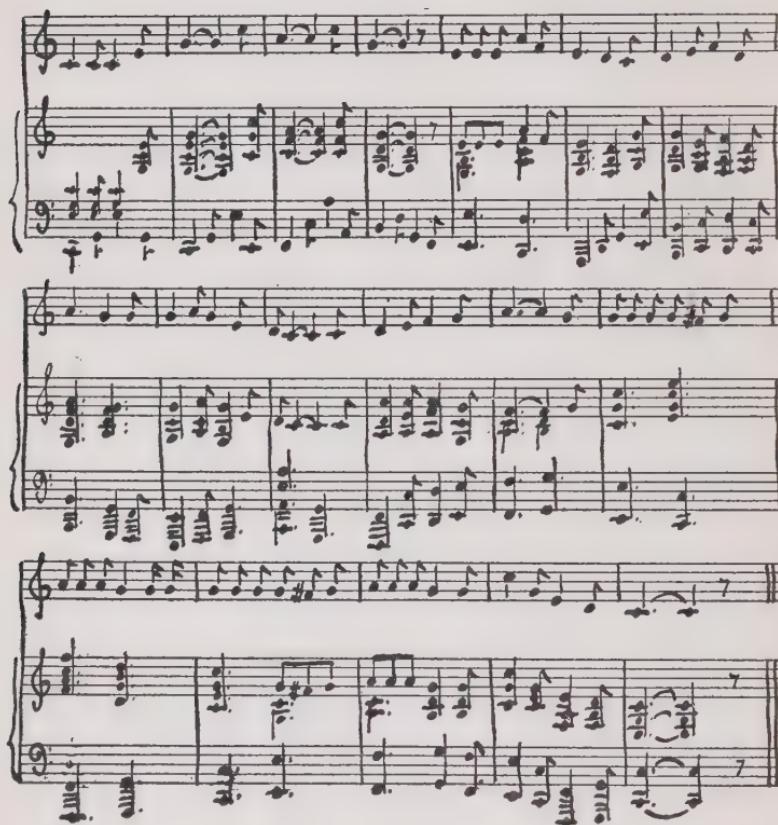
21

Arranged by Van Norman Lucas

VOICE

The musical score is arranged for voice and piano. The vocal line (top staff) starts with a series of eighth-note pairs followed by sixteenth-note pairs. The piano accompaniment (bottom staff) provides harmonic support with sustained chords and rhythmic patterns. The score is set in 6/8 time.

DRINKING SONGS

Let's Get Drunk To-day !

THE HERMIT OF GISSING

FROM that shocking old Hermit of Gissing
No joy of existence is missing.
He lives far aloof,
With a hole in the roof,
And he's rather too dirty for kissing.
Tooralooloo ! Tooralooloo !
And he's rather too dirty for kissing.

“ Your wusshups,” responded the Hermit,
When the Justices queried his permit,
“ While my brain is alert,
I shall stick to my dirt,
As you somewhat fantastic’lly term it.”
(Tooralooloo, etc.)

“ My lad,” said the Boss of the Bench,
“ I conceive that it might be a wrench.
But you can’t be desireless
Of warders and wireless.”
Here the Hermit said something in French.
(Tooralooloo, etc.)

Then he screamed (and we all gave a jump) ;
“ I will *not* end my days in the Lump.
Where I’ve lived I will lie,
With no lid but the sky,
To wait for the Ultimate Trump.
(Tooralooloo, etc.)

*The Hermit of Gissing**Fairly brisk.**Arranged by Van Norman Lucas*

CHORUS

“ Do I want to be badged and brigaded
 Till I’ve wilted and withered and faded ?
 I, who’ve grown my Pertaters
 Like the Irish Free Staters,
 And fashioned my fortunes as they did !
 (Tooralooloo, etc.)

“ Like the famous old man of Newbiggin,
 I’m a bit of a dog at the diggin’ ;
 And the growth of my crops
 Goes on till it stops,
 With the fruit hanging ripe in the riggin’.
 (Tooralooloo, etc.)

“ Like the miser who mised in Nantucket,
 I’ve a fire, though contained in a bucket,
 And you wonder, no doubt,
 If it ever goes out,
 And why in the world I have stuck it.
 (Tooralooloo, etc.)

“ Like the Liberal Member for Ealing,
 I’ve a roof, yet no scrap of a ceiling,
 But the rain which drops in
 Brings conviction of sin,
 And the draughts are obtrusive, but healing.
 (Tooralooloo, etc.)

“ I often go out for a wetting,
 For I’m free of the dawn and sun-setting.
 I leap in my socks
 O’er the hills, with my locks
 Austerely confined in a netting.
 (Tooralooloo, etc.)

“ I converse with the lark and the lamb,
I feed them on biscuits and jam,
And wherever I go
It is plain that they know
What a happy old Hermit I am.
(Tooralooloo, etc.)

“ I sing to each separate Star,
They reply to me, four in a bar,
And the pleasant refrain
Is, again and again :
‘ What a happy old Hermit you are ! ’
(Tooralooloo, etc.)

“ I’ll be free of the dawn and sun-setting
Till ripe for my rest I am getting,
Knowing well that God’s grace
Don’t depend on the place
Which I hold in your wussupful betting.”
(Tooralooloo, etc.)

Then the Justices sighed and looked sad,
And they said, “ It is plain he is mad.”
But the permit was passed,
And that is the last
I have heard of this shocking old lad.
Tooralooloo ! Tooralooloo !
The last of this shocking old lad.

ENGLAND

J UST a line, a shadow, as the dawn grows grey,
Just a misty something smudged upon the sky.
Queasy, greasy billows, freezy, sneezy spray . . .
And I shall be in England, when the sun rides high.
Just a line of chalk-cliff. White ? Well, call it white !
Creeping, creeping nearer ; growing, growing great.
Just a dingy harbour, cursing at the light.
And I'll be soon in England—but my eyes can't wait.

*What is it ? Why is it ? How is it England draws me ?
Mother that bred and broke me, let me go !
Dirty, dingy England, you
Mingy, stingy England, you !—Tell me
What is it in yer makes me love you so ?*

Just a creak of cables, as the boat swings to,
Just a buzz, a clatter, and a breathing-space.
Just a blur, a vision—draggled, drab, and blue—
Common English people with the same old face !
Just a whiff of seaweed and the short sharp cries,
Just a thought of battle blown across the foam,
Just a gangway rushing, as the screw's quick rattle dies.
Strangers on the jetty—but my heart's come home.

What was it she gave us ?—just the right to die !
What was it she owed us ?—all that made her great !
Why was it we dreamt of her, coldly throned on high,
Always with a son's love, never once with hate ?

DRINKING SONGS

England

Arranged by Van Norman Lucas

VOICE

PIANO

REFRAIN

REPEAT 2nd & 3rd VERSES

A musical score for two voices (soprano and alto) and piano. The vocal parts are in common time, while the piano part uses a variety of time signatures including 6/8, 3/4, and 2/4. The score consists of eight staves of music. The first two staves are for the voice and piano respectively. The third staff is for the piano. The fourth staff is for the piano. The fifth staff is for the piano. The sixth staff is for the piano. The seventh staff is for the piano. The eighth staff is for the piano.

English ways went with us, English joke and song,
England flamed around us all the long hard tramp.
Pretty bits of foreign parts, where we don't belong,
Seemed like wooden stage-props moulderling in the damp.

*What is it? Why is it? How is it England draws me?
Mother that made and marred me, here am I—
English down to the roots of me,
English stuff to the guts of me!
That is what makes me love yer fit to die.*

LOVE'S LANTERN

THE Sun's a stout fellow, he's brave and kind-hearted.
He ripens the wheat, he sets soul in the vine.
He's kind yet inconstant ; for, daily departed,
 He leaves me alone in the dark to repine.
Oh, ho ! my brave fellow, a fig for your kindness !
 My pleasure begins when your labour is done.
Though Love is a lad who is stricken with blindness,
 When Love lights his lantern, I laugh at the Sun.

The Moon is a maiden : inconstant though tender.
She beams on fond lovers at midnight astray.
The Devil be damned for her feminine gender !
 She's a will-o'-the-wisp, and she smiles to betray.
Oh, ho ! my fair maid, with your artful deceiving,
 You light me too late, and you leave me too soon.
Though Cupid's a cove you're an ass for believing,
 When Love lights his lantern, I laugh at the Moon.

I've a nodding acquaintance with the Stars in their courses,
As a cue to the compass, the Pole Star's a gem.
But the cues and the stars often lead to divorces,
 And the comfort is cold to fond lovers from them.
Oh, ho ! my Bright Sparklers, I scorn your affection,
 Though I bless the conjunction of Venus and Mars.
For the son that resulted beats all the collection,
 And when Love lights his lantern, I laugh at the Stars.

LOVE'S LANTERN

31

Arranged by Van Norman Lucas

VOICE

PIANO

A handwritten musical score for 'Love's Lantern' arranged by Van Norman Lucas. The score consists of ten staves of music. The first staff is for the Voice, starting in G major (two sharps) and common time. The second staff is for the Piano, also in G major. The third staff is for the Voice, starting in G major and common time. The fourth staff is for the Piano, also in G major. The fifth staff is for the Voice, starting in G major and common time. The sixth staff is for the Piano, also in G major. The seventh staff is for the Voice, starting in G major and common time. The eighth staff is for the Piano, also in G major. The ninth staff is for the Voice, starting in G major and common time. The tenth staff is for the Piano, also in G major.

DRINKING SONGS

Love's Lantern

OTHER SONGS

OTHER SONGS

TO MY LADY

H OW shall I compare her, who's beyond comparing ?
How shall I describe her dignity and grace ?
(Like a statue rising, like the moon sea-faring)
How shall I describe her, who have seen her face ?

Love that follows after when she goes a-walking,
Love that serves her table, guards her resting-place,
Love that laughs to hear her pretty way of talking,
How shall Love describe her, who has seen her face ?

Similes in plenty !—here's a handful of them !
Willow, rose, and streamlet, song-burst of the lark—
Meet for common women, meet for those that love them ;
Calmly stands my lady far beyond their mark.

How shall I compare her, who's beyond comparing ?
How shall I describe her dignity and grace ?
(Like—ah ! like herself, beloved and uncaring)
How shall I forget her, who have seen her face ?

REQUIESCAT

SLEEP ! for the long day's over ;
Brother, sleep !
Hard-won rest for the rover,
And silence deep.

Tattered corpses of trees
Athwart the sky ;
And couches of cushioned ease,
Where the dead men lie.

Yes, though the dawn awaken
With flame and shell ;
Yes, though the earth be shaken,
They shall sleep well.

So, with the earth for cover,
Never a watch to keep,
Sleep ! for the long day's over,
Brother, sleep !

SUMMER MAGIC

ALL day under the trees it was noon,
All day long till the dark night came ;
All day under the trees it was noon,
All day long till the peeping moon
(With great round face as yellow as flame)
Peeped over the hill and called our name.

“ Who was it sat on a golden throne ?
Sing me that song again ! ” she said,
As she pillow'd a place on her lap for my head,
“ Who was it sat on a throne ? ”

“ Stephen sat on a golden throne
(*Oh, but the wind blows cold o'er the sea !*) ;
Fifteen counties he called his own.
Now grass grows on the crumbled stone. . . .”
“ Fie ! ” she cried. “ What a dirge of the dead—
Tell me a fairy tale instead ! ”

“ Once on a time was a boy called Jack ” . . .
Then she covered my mouth with daisies.
And how can a man tell tales of Jack,
When his mouth is covered with daisies ?
“ Carolling birds in the trees above,
What can you sing of so fine as——”
“ Now stop
Babbling empty phrases ! ”
And how can a man sing songs of love
When his mouth is stuffed with daisies ?

OTHER SONGS

(Not to mention two cherry-red lips on top,
And two wide eyes quite near.) . . .
“ I love you, my dear ! ”

Then there trembled a tear—
Came a smile instead.
“ Sing me your silly old dirge,” she said.

“ Stephen sat on a golden throne
(*Oh, but the wind blows cold o'er the sea !*) ;
Fifteen counties he called his own.
Battles he lost, battles he won,
Nothing is left but a crumbled stone.
(*What care I for the days that are done,
So that my love is near to me ?*) ”

All day under the trees it was noon,
All day long till the daylight failed ;
All day long in our hearts high noon,
All day long till the great round moon
(Crickets chirped and the night wind wailed)
Showed us the thought in our hearts unveiled.

SEA BURIAL

H ERE, where life began for them, you will find their grave.

These that knew no measure wait the slow tide's pleasure,
Dreaming how it ran for them, and the big winds drove.

O'er the leaping battlement savage lanterns shone.
“Sword shall never falter, while on that high altar
Bides the devil's sacrament.” Suddenly 'tis gone.

Gone the roaring buccaneer, drum and fife atune.
Ne'er, with linstock lighted, mariner affrighted
Sees the devil's luck anear black across the moon.

Drowsy drabs and vanities hear no more the gun,
Morgan's, Kidd's, or Teach's, wake the whitening beaches
Stale with night's profanities, crawling in the sun.

Fugitive and furious where the long day drones,
Roared and flamed their glory. Who's to tell the story ?
Polypi incurious drift above their bones.

Isles of lust imperial, drunkenness obscene,
Have you ought to tell us ? Nay ! for time is jealous,
Obdurate and jealous.
Naught but shards funereal blister in the green :

Musket, pike, and bombard, o'erwhelmed. Time-tattered
spars.
Rotten old rum-puncheons. Rusting, splintered trun-
cheons . . .
Here nor crew nor commodore vomit to the stars.

OTHER SONGS

Till he leaneth over with his landing net,
He, that angel dreadful, they shall rest forgetful,
Drab and bully rover . . .

Fame's phantasmagorial harlot leaves behind
Death—that was her dower, night—that reaped the flower :
Earth's complete memorial, muffled, dumb, and blind.

MAY OR JUNE, WAS IT ?

DO you remember how hot was the sun ?
(May or June, was it,
High up by the sea ?)

How fragrant the air was with earth and sea-weather ?
The earth a great blossom ! Nay ! you were the flower.
Do you remember how love was begun ?

(May or June, was it,
High up by the sea ?)

How the hands met, and the hearts came together ?
Have you forgotten the love of that hour ?

Forget ! What's there else in the world to remember ?

Sitting here in the dark I am there with you still.
And the blaze of the sun is that glow in the ember,
And the dark is the sea looking up at the hill.
O smile of your eyes, and O flaunt of blue weather ;
O lull of the sunshine, and hum of the bee !
Blown hair round your face, and our lips knit together !
(May or June, was it ?) High up by the sea.

THE LAST FIGHT OF THE ENGLISH

WE bear the name of Englishman, we know no better name.

We won the right to wear it, in glory and in shame.
From Flodden unto Agincourt, from Crécy to Poitiers,
We marched, your father's sire and mine, adown the sounding
years.

A peasant was my sire, and yours a knight of lands,
But we did the work together God put into our hands,
Till the house our sires had builded fell to your catpurse
bands.

A king spake and a bell
Tolled, and a house fell ;
And the flame of our last revolt was quenched where now a
factory stands.

Where once an English peasant dwelt, a naked vagrant cried ;
But when my sanctuary failed, it was your soul that died.

Yet, for the sake of old days and the land that bore us twain,
I bowed my stubborn neck to the yoke that was not all a pain.
Yet, for the sake of an old song, I stayed your henchman still,
Though the calm insolence of your eyes made mockery of my
will.

Till we that fought shoulder to shoulder had fought face to
face,
Marched together out of our home into a strange place.
The land stayed, the land stayed, yet not with the English
race,

The land stayed, the land stayed,
And ever the English bugle played,
And the English flag still flew above us ; but the lord had an
alien face.

We that had drunk great ale together on an ale bench in the
sun,

By the sight and smell of the English earth once ours, our day
was done.

The life we loved and the ways of it, the homely English
ways,

Changed to the ways of an alien lord, passed with the ancient
days.

And the English folk, the English bowed to an alien sign,
In England, little England, that was your sire's and mine.

The harm you did to me and mine I will forget to-day,
For the bitter winds of the latter years blow the dream away.
But the English flag still floats above us, the English bugles
play—

The old call, the call we know !

Over the world the bugles blow . . .

And your son and mine, your brother and mine, fallow the
foreign clay.

Nothing of hatred come between us who be Englishmen,
For a bitterer hate than ever I bore you makes us one again.
Nothing of hatred come between us until that last tide

When the peasant and the gentleman shall stand up side by
side,

Lit by the flaming torches of cottages and towers,
And look across those level English acres that are ours.

Ours, though the English garden is choked with alien weeds ;
Ours, though in every manor-house a fat financier feeds.

The land stays, the land stays,

Wherever the English bugle plays,

Ours—though we work in a chain-gang to serve their basest
needs.

Ours are the hills and valleys, ours are the lakes and plains,
The old red-curtained taverns, the friendly winding lanes,
The endless moor a-blossom, the willow tree a-dip,
The knee-deep grass,
The stern, straight pass,
The high headland with a sea of stars and one lone ship—
Ours, for a double pledge to keep the while that we draw
breath—
A bitterer hate than ever I bore you, a love as strong as
death.

Spread wide your arms from the westering rock, where
Cornwall curbs the tide,
To the cloud-clipped shield of Dover, clean-burnished with
our pride ;
From the brave bleak north to the salt sea-lanes where our
nesting navies ride.
Bone of our bone, ours !
A grey rock with a crown of flowers !
England, flesh of our flesh to hold, brother, your arms spread
wide !

For the air is blithe in England, and the clay beneath our feet
Is full of a strange tumult like a heart's quick beat ;
For the English folk, the English, who knew so long eclipse,
They gather, they gather with her name upon their lips ;
They gather, they gather, the Beresford and the Brown,
Smith, Wilson, Johnson, Drake, Thompson, Cobbet, and
Vere-de-Vere,
The bankrupt English gentleman, the broken English clown,
Unknown to one another, helped by no answering cheer,
Not for an easy battle, not for an idle fear,
But a last hard fight for freedom before the sun go down.

UP, BORDERERS !

God put us on an island mid the seas of our desire,
And east and west and north and south we bore the
sacred fire,
The flame of English valour, the memory of home—
Of a turf-crowned cliff uplifted on a feathery crest of foam.

Our wars are outland forays, our fame-scarred warriors tell
How Frenchman looks at German across the bars of hell.
What though a stray marauder drop death into our night,
We do but see the shadow of death, we have not known the
fight.

In immemorial unconstraint our island galleon rides,
And feeds her virgin silence on the trumpet of the tides,
And hears a laughing echo cry comfort to her keel :
“ The devil does not march at arms a Sabbath march from
Deal.”

And yet a tale the Frenchman told, propped in a reeking
trench,
Of how in Southland passes the Spaniard meets the French—
Daylong one day of all the year to bring the memory back
Of a time when war was not so vile and hate was not so black.

He had forgot what fight it was each year they fight again,
Hand fast to hand and claw to throat, across the bridge of
Spain ;
But the drums of it beat in his blood as the war-sick poilu
told
How brave men play the clean hard game that brave men
played of old.

And here we rest secure, secure, in our triple-tested seas,
And have no honest foeman beyond our Pyrenees
To hold the challenge of scornful eyes and fling it flaming
back.

As in the days when war was war and hate was not so black.

Shall we not long for the border ridings of those younger
days—

Even the bitter feud blood-rusted and the hills ablaze ?

When a bond which is a bitterer thing holds our hands apart,
And the sons of the red rievers peddle pennyworths in the
mart ?

We proved our pride on their driving spear, and theirs on our
shearing sword.

In the days ere they sent us the Knight of Geddes to sit on a
railway board.

They were clean-bred men from horn to hoof when we met
them steel to steel

Ere the Kanuck Scot came home, came home, to serve the
common weal.

Give us back the dead years, and fix our borders plain
As France has fixed her borders along the hills of Spain !
For the Scotsman rides far south, far south, and turns not
back again,

And never a borderer bars the road, and Armstrong died in
vain.

Hand fast to hand, and claw to throat, border to border
cling !

Let honour be worth the price of death, and life a little
thing !

Give us back our border again ! lest we recall too late
The simple human fellowship that comes of ancient hate.

THE HIGH WALL

I WILL build up a wall for Freedom to dwell therein,
A high wall with towers,
And steel fangs for a gate.

For Freedom that lacks a home falleth by pit and gin,
A prey to the alien powers
That lie in wait.

I will build up a house for her where the ways divide,
A house set on a hill,
With a lamp in the topmost tower ;
And a trumpet calling to arms, and a flag like a flame blown wide,
And a sword to save and to kill
For her bridal dower.

I will take her to wife—she that is life and death ;
Life—for a trumpet calls ;
Death—for it calls me still,
And I shall know love—a star, and a fluttering breath
Till the shadow of silence falls
In the house on the hill.

I will build up a house for her where the ways divide,
Four-square on the rock,
· A high house and a great ;
So, when I fly, spent, back from a broken ride,
Her key shall cry in the lock,
She shall stand in the gate.

She shall stand in the gate—the prize of the world to win,
Stand steel-shod, crowned with a cloud of flowers.
I will build up a wall, a wall, for Freedom to dwell therein,
In the name of the most high God—
A wall with towers.

AUTUMN TWILIGHT

THE air is chill, the yellow leaves are falling,
The sky is grey with tears that will not fall ;
Among the trees a few sad songsters calling
Hear only sighs in answer to their call.

And yet comes eve with silent shadowy spaces,
And yet comes eve with sombre purple west,
And smooths the scars of battle from our faces,
And kisses us, and softly whispers, " Rest ! "

Sing me a song of Twilight, oh sad singer,
Of live-winged shadows deep'ning into night ;
Of Twilight touching us with cool soft finger,
And drawing Day's dull curtain from our sight—

To show us magic sleights, the firm earth shifting,
To send time groping backward in the past,
To launch the soul forth unto Great-Sea drifting,
And give it peace at last.

Nay, hush your song ! die out, oh last bird's sobbing !
Gather, oh shadows, deeper and more deep !
Rise not, oh moon of night ! cease, heart, from throbbing !
Flutter, oh tired eyelids, into sleep !

Come close, oh night, your wraps around me flinging,
And let there be a little rest from strife,
For silence is more beautiful than singing,
And Death than Life.

THE TEA-SHOP GIRL

CROSSING the tea-room, end to end,
Unhurried, swift, and sure.
O'er each male customer you bend,
Coquettish and demure.

In rusty black and spotless white,
Pale as a waxen rose,
You float above the reckless flight
Of rattling dominoes.

With sharpened senses all agog,
And brain that never tires,
You con the bilious catalogue
Of our obscure desires.

And magically, as in dreams,
Oh, priestess ! in a trice,
Upon my marble altar gleams
A well-burned sacrifice.

In hidden corners such as this
You vanish for a while,
And sounds like those that end a kiss
Acquaint us why you smile.

And why your cheek that was so white
Burns with a sudden flame ;
(The devil damn his acolyte,
Who calls you by your name).

Your hands are very thin, my dear,
And bloodless as your face,
'Tis bad to skip the day down here
In this lamp-litten place.

'Tis bad to trapse the way to Death,
Beneath this dreary yoke,
And breathe the sickening after-breath
Of stale tobacco-smoke.

'Tis bad . . . oh, hang the preaching ! Come !
My arm around your waist !
And we will preach this sermon—dumb—
That love is good to taste.

What ? Good to sip, and sip, and stay,
And never drink your fill,
And learn that man may have his way,
But must not have his will ?

And good to glance, and flirt, and feign,
And dodge the hand of Fate,
And learn the glory and the pain
Of recklessness too late ?

The waves of love foam round your feet,
Blown by the breath of Man.
Drink—and be damned !—or quit, my sweet
Platonic courtesan.

IN HAMPTON COURT GARDENS

DEAD painters of our galleries, who painted years ago
The ladies in their loveliness, the ladies in their pride,
What think ye, merry gentlemen, of this our beauty-show—
Live loveliness that challenges the loveliness that died ?
Could you portray such tresses, that tempt one to caresses ?
Could you evoke such glances, such life, that sings and
dances ?

Such pretty, pouting lips, that woo you—and say “ No ” ?
And could you match the ardour this canticle confesses,
Dear painters of dull galleries, who flattered years ago ?

Dead painters of our galleries, your praise was a pretence.
You blurred the fault to gain a tone, and guard a patron’s
grace.
Your art it was an artifice, and lies the eloquence
That bade you blot the blemishes from your dear lady’s
face.
But we, with hearts elated, gaze on, gaze on unsated.
Her cheek is milk and roses, her mocking smile discloses
White tiny teeth like flute-notes, set in an even row.
Her eyes—who shall describe them, ye superannuated
Old painters of dead galleries, who practised years ago ?

Dead painters of our galleries, ’twere madness to dispute
Your poet’s eager praises of Chloe and of Joan ;
But love laughed not in palaces, and wrinkled was the fruit
Of feather-pate philanderings when Charles was on the
throne.

And now to manlier measure may pulse the pipe of pleasure,
And here blind Love the vagrant plucks posies fresh and
fragrant,

And here trips lass or lady with sun-breathed airs aglow ;
And here's our spring-time harvest ; and there's your cheap-
Jack treasure !

Dead painters of dull courtesans who perished years ago.

TINA OF BALLOO

A H ! Tina, Tina ! Tina of Balloo !
Somehow I thought I'd quite forgotten you—
Your chalk-white face, black hair, red pouting lips,
Pert head thrust forward, just a thought askew,
Long slender tendril fingers at the hips.

Forgotten with those cursed nights and days
When scarecrows wallowed in the mud-choked ways,
And Death leered at me from the parapet,
And barked—and burst—and set my brain ablaze. . . .
But no, it's not so easy to forget.

For, see ! I've got my finger on the map—
Gavinchy—Devil's Wood—that devil-trap ! . . .
And through it all I seem to see you smile,
I seem to feel you sitting on my lap. . . .
And those damned crumps go bursting all the while.

Each name the memory of a night in hell !
Each bit of pock-marked earth I know so well.
Shut my eyes tight, and there I am again—
Waiting and waiting. Nothing much to tell.
Only a cesspool and a touch of pain.

Oh yes, there's much—all whirling in my head.
Bashing their grinning teeth until you're dead,
Or they are. Then, done, broken, beat, washed-out,
Pulling your foot on like a lump of lead,
With empty nothingness all round about ;

And this good boy gone west, and that, and that.
Only last night, an hour ago, he sat
As close to me as you are. Well, old lad,
Sleeping so soundly in your old trench hat,
We've won the ditch you died for ; aren't you glad ?

And all the while I'm in that old caffay.
I see you pause—and smile—and turn away ;
I see you float as lightly as a bird
Above the random chatter . . . Bloody clay
Mires me up to the eyeballs. It's absurd.

God ! if the Huns ! . . . Oh, chuck it ! . . . But I guess
What those French Johnnies felt. You've seen 'em. Yes ?
Taking a village where they used to live ?
There's things a human fellow can't express,
There's things a human lover can't forgive.

But that's the thought that drove us to the grips—
The thought of Tina and her pouting lips,
And all the pretty ways we used to know—
Tina, our Tina ! . . . And the rifle dips.

• • • • • • •
God ! It was just ten million years ago !

TO RICHARD MIDDLETON

THERE is a gap within our ranks to-night,
The chairs are filled, and yet I miss his face,
Whose singing was a fragrance and a light
About our meeting-place.

Whose petulant rough gesture and wild hair
Were as a frame for those shy friendly eyes.
Dream-slipped from out his much-tormented chair,
Calm in the earth he lies.

Calmly he rests whose soul was like a sea
Whipped by desires unsatisfied, unnamed,
Was like a trapped god struggling to be free,
A fire that never flamed.

The golden cities that his verses piled
Rise on the mountain-tops serene and strong.
Part woman, part swashbuckler, and part child,
He was lord of song.

You know the man!—square seated at the board,
Rapping your knuckles with a bludgeon phrase,
Turning your counter on a happy word
Gentler than woman's ways.

You know that glumness with a bitter fang,
That wild, gay humour lurking in his curls,
That shy, reluctant, reckless voice that sang
Of all his golden girls.

Ah, golden girls ! you watch for him in vain—
 'Tis but a stranger tapping at the door.
Your burly playboy of a western lane
 Comes to you nevermore.

Ah, golden girls ! leave your fair locks undone,
 Your dainty shapes unlaced, your tears undried !
Weep—that of all of you not one, not one
 Was with him when he died.

Bah ! Let the women and their tears go hang !
 The lamp is out, and life and love have end.
Better than all the kisses that he sang
 They say he left a friend.

A friend !—that's much—some verses—and a clod,
 A clod that yesterday drew glorious breath,
But not one word to tell us why he trod
 The backstairs-way to Death.

What was the grief sat gnawing at his heart,
 What love's betrayal turned his blood to gall,
What bodily anguish tore his soul apart,
 The grave-mound covers all.

But, whether the devil of dearth, grown insolent,
 Stamped on his naked brain with feet gold-shod,
Or life went when desire of dreaming went,
 This murder cries to God.

TO JOHN DAVIDSON

I S it farewell, John ? Are you gone for good ?
(For evil, rather, let us say, who prized you.)
Have you writ Finis in a cynic mood
Because mankind so scantily recognised you ?

Or did you know the last true word was said ?
And did you feel the husk grow thick and thicker ?
Did your soul cry—John Davidson is dead,
Dead in his liquor ?

His liquor ! not that precious bubbling stuff
That floated us, all dull earth-logic scorning,
High as the stars of midnight—safe enough,
To fetch a splitting headache for the morning.

No, but this latest brew, this muddy ale,
Which, wanting customers, he swilled instead.
Of such vile stuff I hear the poor soul wail,
John Davidson is dead.

So let us bundle him beneath the clay.
Let's have no ghost to mock his splendid story.
Slash ! and the hand of Death has shorn away
All but his glory.

And thus men turn, John, once again to think—
Forgotten all that roaring harsh finale—
Of John—old John of Fleet Street, and to drink
 Ave et Vale !

Or did you tire of John—his little joke,
His gesture, thought, his theory of creation,
And strip the whole thing off in one grand stroke,
Then march away to seek reincarnation ?

And do you, masked in wig and whisker hoar,
Each keen eye lidded in a big blue shutter,
Tramp, as you've tramped, old John, how oft before !
The Fleet Street gutter ?

Or have you cast your old self clean away,
And do you stagger under bricks and plaster,
And prove with pickaxe, at five bob a day,
That force is master ?

Take care ! we hunt you ! Place to place we track
Now here, now there, now there in breathless chronicle,
Your piercing eye, pale face, and hair coal black
And shining monocle.

Where do you hide, John ? in what ocean cave
Cracking your sides with laughter, wild, satiric ;
Putting out tinspot-pother in a brave
Ten-league-long lyric.

Of how we left for years with uncut leaf
That mighty pile of stodgy volumes lying,
And then burst into fits of frantic grief,
Because their author took the whim of dying.

Of dying ! Yes, perchance, in some yards deep
Rockcleft you slumber, while we rave about you,
So sound, no critic ass can break your sleep
To flout you.

Perchance ! we know not. Here's the meagre text :
John Davidson is gone, is gone, is gone,
John Davidson, in this world or the next,
Sloughs off John Davidson.

THE LAUREL LIVETH

I HAVE brought gems from Africa,
And pearls from the deep.
I have seen Prester John,
And the serpent Queen of Babylon,
And slim, slant-eyed mermaidens
Lulling the waves asleep.

I have pushed flame-dripping argosies
Against a tropic tide.
I have met innocence unafraid—
Of blood-red blossom her crown was made,
And I have known that her name was Death
When I took her for my bride.

I have gazed from a high, bleak hill-top
At the cities of the Sun ;
I have flung my life in a Spaniard's face,
And slept at last in a narrow place
Far behind the lessening hulls low-laden
With the treasure we had won.

I trod the road the Romans trod,
With Cæsar at my back ;
Behind my lifted shield have seen
The Gaul sweep sudden from the green ;
And the shield locked, the sword drove,
And blood was on our track.

Stone born unto the eternal hills,
I saw their cities rise—
Four-square to all the winds of God ;
And these lie level with the clod
Where buried legionaries dream
With unregarding eyes.

I that am here have gone a-riding
With Roland into Spain.
Follow, follow his flaming lance !
God be with you, land of France !
The eagles gather at Roncesvalles,
We come not home again.

I ran by Richard the Lion, his stirrup,
When he rode in the Holy Land.
A Moslem spear rusts in my side,
But Richard saw me when I died,
And he knelt and prayed to Christ for succour
With a cross-hilt in his hand.

Ha ! Saint George ! Together the arrows are flying ;
Helmet and plume go down.
Down goes knighthood, gold-arrayed.
Steel sweeps into the gap we made.
Ha ! Let loose ! push forward ! Thrones come tumbling
At the cry of an English clown.

I that have climbed to high adventure
Lie in the dust at last,
Pitiful slave that hath no lord,
Dragon guarding a phantom hoard !
Babylon's day ! Rome's day !
England's day is past.

OTHER SONGS

Thus the bells are tolling, tolling.

Yet we be Englishmen,
We that come of matchless sires,
Shall we sink to a slave's desires ?
Shall not the old Flame rekindle ?

Freedom be born again !

There is a grave was Attica ;

There is a wall was Rome.
Yet the ancient spirit lingers,
Tuning harps for unskilled fingers.
So may the spirit of England endure
When England's voice is dumb.

• • • • •
Here I stand on the shore, and watch

The manifold deeds of man—
Flotsam of laurel, poppy, and vine,
I that am man, these deeds are mine—
Wreckage of all that ever I did
Since my maimed deeds began.

Mine are the poppies of victory,
The laurels of defeat,
Christian pity, heathen pride,
Flotsam plucked from an ebbless tide.
So ! let the brimming armful fall
In homage at your feet.

Let them rest, or gather them up,

A garland for your hair !
Tear them, scatter them, shred by shred,
Passion passeth, glory's dead,
But I hold you close and look in your eyes
And see life lurking there.

Our life is God's, who gave us life,
Our deeds for Him we do.
And yet, O star, O pilgrim soul,
Your love may light us to that goal.
If I come near to God at last
"Twill be by loving you.

Ever another deed for the doing,
And a voice to cry, " Well done ! "
Here in my arms is my desire ;
But the morning shakes the world with fire.
Touch my lips and bid me go !
For the tumbrils front the sun.

FLEET STREET

SUMMER lies hot in the street,
But the sky is a cloud.
Through a hole in it beat
Savage daggers of heat,
And the air presses flat
On my head like a hat.
From the heel to the head
I am lead, I am lead.
Through the purposeless rush
That jostles and stumbles
I stumble and rush.

And away, away there
The world's yellow with wheat.
A lark's in the air,
And with passionate feet
The wind spurs the wheatsheaves, the trees, and the grasses—
That bow as she passes,
And whisper, "How fair!"
And murmur, "Behold her!
Goddess, destroyer, almighty enfolder!"
And sparkling, more sparkling, and dimmer and dimmer,
The rill runs to rapture through shadow and glimmer . . .
While, broken and bowed,
I sweat in the crowd.



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